1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
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reached the age when it is considered proper for a man to marry. In recent times at least one young man has refused to undergo the privations connected with the initiation ceremonies. This was of course a case of gross rebellion against the customs of the tribe, but there was no way of punishing him or of compelling him to conform, save by showing him that he was an object of contempt and ridicule to others. Probably such a refusal to conform to tribal customs could not have taken place before the British occupation of the islands.

Another class of wrong actions consists in the breaking of ritual prohibitions. There are, for example, as will be shown in a later chapter, a number of actions which it is believed may cause bad weather, such as burning bees'-wax or killing a cicada. There is, however, no punishment that can be meted out to any one who does any of these things. The punishment, if we may call it so, is a purely supernatural one, and it strikes not only the offender but every one else as well. In the legends of the Andamanese there are one or two stories related of how one of the ancestors, being angry, deliberately performed one of the forbidden actions and thus brought a storm that destroyed many human beings[1]. There are other ritual prohibitions the non-observance of which is supposed to bring its own punishment on the offender, who, it is believed, will be ill.

The medicine-men (*oko-jumu*) are credited with the power to work evil magic, and by its means to make other people ill, and even to kill them. A man suspected of evil magic might be liable to the vengeance of those who thought that they had been injured by him, but though the practice was regarded as reprehensible it does not seem that the society ever acted as a whole to punish a man suspected of it.

Children are reproved for improper behaviour, but they are never punished. During their years of infancy they are much spoilt, not only by their parents but by every one. During the period of adolescence every boy and girl has to undergo a somewhat severe discipline, to be described in a later chapter.

[1] See below, Chap. IV.

2:Man G-5 (1869-1880)1932 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

occasion "they brought in some escaped convicts, whom, however, they first plundered, besides removing every bit of iron from the boat in which they had escaped. On being taxed with this they at first pleaded surprise, then said they would make restitution, and brought a canoe as an exchange for the mischief they had done to the government boat. At first this was not quite understood and the canoe was sent back, but they returned it next day, explaining that they desired it to be kept as a reimbursement for the injury they had done to the government boat, so no longer considered the canoe theirs."

4. As another example of the same kind:—when the present penal colony at Port Blair was first established, the aborigines were observed to refrain from shooting at any of the chain-gang prisoners, evidently judging that they at least could not be voluntary invaders of their territory, and to confine their hostility to the petty officers and others not in chains, till these at last, finding themselves in constant danger, sought and obtained permission to carry on their duties in fetters.[1]

5. Much mutual affection is displayed in their social relations, and, in their dealings with strangers, the same characteristic is observable when once a good understanding has been established.

6. It is a noteworthy trait, and one that deserves high commendation, that every care and consideration are paid by all classes to the very young, the weak, the aged, and the helpless, and these, being made special objects of interest and attention, invariably fare better in regard to the comforts and necessaries of daily life than any of the otherwise more fortunate members of the community.

7. Andamanese children are reproved for being impudent and forward, but discipline is not enforced by corporal punish-

[1] It may not be unworthy of notice to record here yet another instance of generosity of disposition displayed by one of these savages. In January, 1877, a party of 24 *Bhil* convicts effected their escape: all but some 11 or 12 were soon re-captured. Those still at large proved desperate, showing by their murderous assault on some aborigines, who had unconsciously approached their hiding place in the jungle, that they were prepared to resist capture at all hazards. The chief "*mūnshī*" *.bī'ela* (*vide* Plate II, fig. 2) thereupon headed a party of his tribe and some policemen, and, in spite of the parched condition of the soil—it being then late in February—succeeded in tracking the runaways, who had penetrated several miles into an unfrequented part of the jungle. Refusing to surrender themselves they were attacked, with the result that all were either captured or shot down. On being asked by the Chief Commissioner what reward would be most acceptable for the service the aborigines had performed on this occasion, *.bī'ela* replied that he would prefer to anything else that the Chief Commissioner should remit the remaining portion of the six months' sentence passed on four members of a Middle Andaman tribe, who, a few months before, had been convicted of shooting, at Kyd Island, some Chinamen engaged in collecting edible birds' nests. The prisoners were almost unknown to *.bī'ela*, and their release, therefore, could no more have concerned him personally than did their punishment. His request was granted.

2:Man G-5 (1869-1880)1932 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

ment; they are early taught to be generous and self-denying, and the special object of the fasting period, regarding which I shall hope to speak to you on another occasion, seems to be to test the fortitude and powers of endurance of the lads and lasses before entering upon the cares and responsibilities of married life. The duties of showing respect and hospitality to friends and visitors being impressed upon them from their early years, all guests are well treated; every attention is paid to their wants, the best food at their host's disposal is set before them, and, ere they take their leave, some tokens of regard or goodwill are bestowed, or, to speak more correctly, interchanged. Strangers visiting an encampment for the first time are welcomed if introduced by some mutual friend.[1]

8. It has been observed by ethnologists who have described certain other primitive races, that modesty and morality are not dependent on, or to be gauged by, the amount of covering which is deemed requisite by either sex. The Andamanese present another instance in point; and in the esteem in which they hold these virtues, and the self-respect which characterises their intercourse with each other, may even be said to compare favourably with that existing in certain ranks among civilised races.[2]

9. In the manufacture of their weapons, utensils, and other articles, they habitually display a remarkable amount of perseverance and industry, spending hour after hour in laboriously striking pieces of iron with a stone hammer for the purpose of forming spear or arrow-heads, or in improving the shape of a bow, &c., even though there be no necessity, immediate or prospective, to stimulate them to such efforts. The incentive is evidently a spirit of emulation, each one priding himself on being able to produce work which will excel, or at least compare not unfavourably with, that of his neighbours.

10. Selfishness is not among their characteristics, for they frequently make presents of the best that they possess, and do not reserve, much less make, weapons, &c., of superior workmanship for their own private use; at the same time it must be

[1] On seeing a stranger at a gathering, it would be asked: *ōl mij'a?* (who is he?) or, if the visitor be senior to the inquirer, *ōl mij'ola?* (who is that elder or chief?)

[2] Women are so modest that they will not renew their leaf aprons in the presence of one another, but retire to a secluded spot for this purpose; even when parting with one of their *bōd-* appendages to a female friend the delicacy they manifest for the feelings of the bystanders in their mode of removing it almost amounts to prudishness. Coarse conversation appears to be of rare occurrence and to meet with little or no encouragement. Remarks on the personal appearance or peculiarities of friends or blood relatives are considered harmless, but if made in reference to a wife or husband would be regarded as indelicate and objectionable, and resented accordingly.